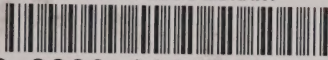
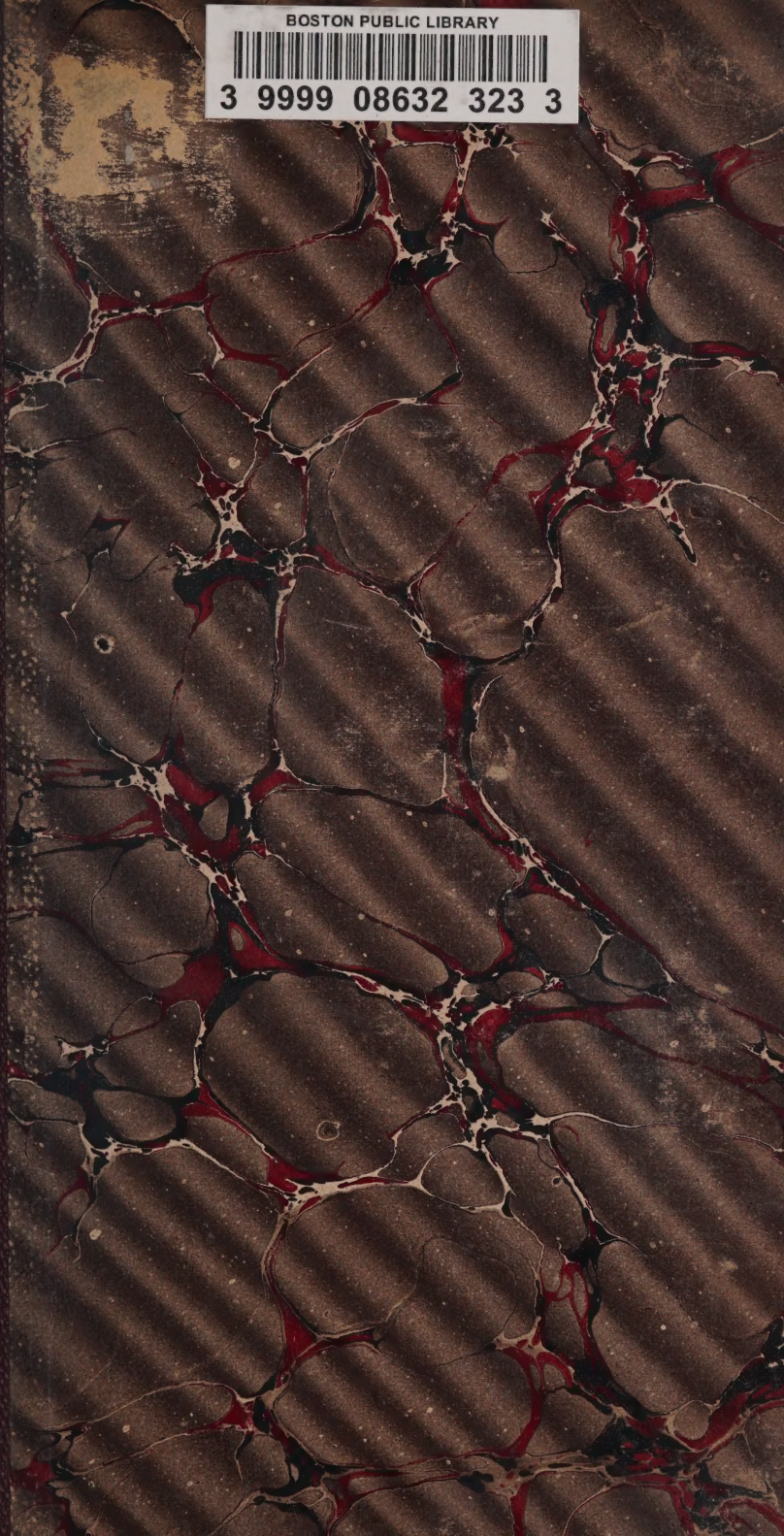


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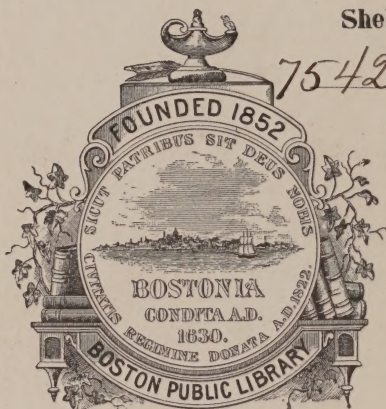


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UNITARIAN CHURCH IN DOVER, N. H.

DECEMBER 30, 1835.

BY N. L. FROTHINGHAM,

Minister of the First Church, Boston.

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SERMON.

MY CHRISTIAN HEARERS :

Coming among you as a stranger, and speaking to you but as one among several who have closer and more special words to say, I seem to have but a remote part to take in this occasion. Yet the occasion is one of great importance to you, and to me of a very lively and affecting interest. I can never see a young man, though he were wholly unknown to me, devoting himself to the work—the work of a minister of the gospel, and set apart for that holy service, and taking upon himself its vows, and standing up for the first time in the relation of a pastor among those with whom his duties and happiness are to be so bound up, without stronger emotions than I could well define, or strictly justify, or possibly express. The mind is carried back to many sacred recollections, and then forward through many scenes of anxious labor and doubtful success. But it would be improper to dwell on any private feelings, and your own are met to the full by the other services that belong to this day.

The language of prayer, the most touching of all language, is to draw us together as no other can before the throne of worship and love. The solemn charge is to remind the minister of his obligations. The hand of fellowship is to convey the affectionate sentiments of the churches. I am to be followed too by one, who knows you and is known of you. He will address you more directly. He will press upon topics, that have an immediate connexion with what is now passing through the minds of this assembly. He will speak to old experiences and attachments and to present hopes. The familiar voice of a tried friend will awaken your sensibility and sink into your hearts.

For me there seems nothing left, but to choose out and set before you some general view,—one from among many,—of the nature or history of that divine faith which is to be preached in this place. May it be preached long and fervently and fruitfully by the young man, who is now to assume his place as a teacher in the church of God and his Christ!

My text is taken from

HEBREWS I. 1.

GOD, WHO AT SUNDRY TIMES AND IN DIVERS MANNERS SPAKE IN TIME PAST UNTO THE FATHERS BY THE PROPHETS, HATH IN THESE LAST DAYS SPOKEN UNTO US BY HIS SON.

In these stately expressions we find four important principles distinctly recognized. God has spoken to his creature man;—He has spoken to him through the

instrumentality of his brethren of the same race ;— He has spoken to him by successions, and not once for all ;—He has spoken to him in various modes, and not always alike.

He has spoken. He has attested his providence. He has declared his will. He has communicated sacred lessons of duty and truth. That He has done this in some sense, in one or another form, in a greater or less degree, must be admitted by all who acknowledge that He is.

But further, He has done it through human instrumentality. In what other way could the world be so permanently or so affectingly taught ? Signs and wonders could be only occasionally displayed ; for they would cease to be either signs or wonders if they were common. They would fall into the rank of ordinary events, exciting no surprise and leading to no moral consequences. Spirits might appear to us, like that which passed before the face of Eliphaz in the book of Job ; but the unsubstantial image would soon fade from sight, and the voice that issued from it would pass also by, like the night wind on which its warning had died away. Angels might come down from the sky ; but the same wings that brought them would soon carry them back to their dwelling-places of glory, and no enduring result would remain from the transient visit after they had taken their flight. God spake to the fathers by the prophets ;—by the lips of wise and good men to whom He had imparted His spirit. Such men leave records after them of their thoughts and their history, and those records are

enduring repositories and living oracles of divine truth. It is thus that the world learns, the most naturally, the most distinctly, the most effectually. The proper intercourse of a mind is with minds like itself. There must be a proportion and correspondence between those who teach and those who are taught, or the lesson will be either not understood or not regarded. It is so that the word of sacred instruction has always been dispensed and received. Spoken at first that it might be heard, it has been afterwards written that it might be perpetuated; and it has always preserved a certain relation to the intellectual advancement and spiritual wants of the persons to whom it was sent.

This leads us to the third point respecting it, which is contained in the text. It has been spoken "at sundry times,"—by successions, and not once for all. Noah was a preacher of righteousness before the flood. In that early day there lived those, who, though so long dead, are speaking yet. Abraham, at the head of the Patriarchs, has spread from the East to the West the fame of his pure doctrine and faithful example. Moses gave the law, a stern yoke for a stubborn people, but at the same time a branch from the sweet tree of mercy, cast, like the healing wood which he himself threw into the fountains of Marah, upon the bitter waters of a dark age. The royal David sung the praises of God with a fervor of thought and expression, that will always be felt with power on human hearts. Then followed the prophets of Israel and Judah;—not in one "glorious company," as the venerable service of the church of England de-

scribes them, but in a long train of noble minds gradually succeeding each other, touched by the same spirit but dwelling apart. They belonged to different generations, though they were destined to exert a united influence on after times. They were heard, like Amos, from among the herdsmen of Ephraim, and, like Daniel, from the court of the Persian king;—by their own native streams, and from beyond the rivers of Babylon, where they sat down and wept as they remembered Zion. But their words were appointed, in the good providence of that Lord in whose name they were written, to cross seas that were then unknown, and extend instruction to the ends of a new world.

Can we now suppose that these men, thus separated from each other in time and space, in the circumstances of their country and in their own personal condition,—in every thing but in their readiness to obey the divine impulse,—should utter themselves in the same way? This is not to be imagined, and we accordingly find the word to have been spoken “in divers manners” unto the fathers by the prophets. Some of them rehearsed from the past the righteous acts of the Lord, and some saw in the future His coming mercies and judgements. Some announced in plain language His commandments, and some celebrated in the highest strains of poetical fancy His wondrous perfections. Some spoke the sententious wisdom of proverbs, and others wrapped up their meaning in parables, or embellished it with splendid

fictions, or set it forth under the cloud of dreams and visions. Each caught his peculiar tone from his situation, from his turn of mind, from the period in which he lived. They were more or less refined, both in their thoughts and their manner of expressing them, according to their dispositions and intellectual culture.

And if those ancient men who taught the fathers were so different from one another, how different from them all, and how far beyond them all, was the Son, by whom in these last days God has spoken to mankind! Whatever was doubtful in the former dispensations his coming has explained. Whatever was imperfect in the former faith his doctrine has completed. His gospel, though connected with what was said by the holy men of old, was of a different spirit. It was new in all the terms of its covenant. It enjoined a milder law and announced better promises. It closed the book of those divine communications, which have trained up the religious sentiments of a great part of the world.

The sum of what has now been said is this,—that the scriptures are a series of instructions, exceedingly various in their kinds, but yet with a principle of harmony running through them, beginning with what was suited to the infancy, and terminating in what matches and fills the utmost maturity of the mind; carrying within themselves a divine arrangement and plan, and acting upon society with a combined power.

As I look at them from this point of view, they appear to me to be the book of religious education for

the human race. I would take up this idea, and endeavor to unfold some of the thoughts that lie contained in it.

The principle assumed is, that the world has been educated to its present state of religious knowledge, feeling and hope, by the Bible ; much as we are educated by the circumstances and lessons of our early years. What education is to the individual, revelation has been to the race. What books and teachers are to the one, the sacred writings have proved to be to the other. This is the thought which the present discourse will go on to maintain and illustrate. To some it may possibly sound like a novelty, and others, perhaps, may be ready to think it a mere supposition leading to no practical use. But a little reflection will show it to be neither one nor the other. It is not new. It is implied in the very words of the text, according to the exposition which has been already given of them. Paul in one of his epistles expressly says that the law,—by which he intended the whole religious system and records of his nation,—was a school-master to bring men to Christ. And is not Christ himself the great prophet and master ? Is it not by his doctrine that he redeems the world ? Neither is the idea now presented without practical value. While it is calculated to inspire a becoming reverence for the holy writings, it furnishes the only means of repelling the heaviest objections which have been brought against them, by showing that the representations must needs be sometimes coarse and imperfect, which were designed for the training up of rude

generations, incapable of receiving the refinements of more spiritual truth. We thus learn that it is no valid argument against any portion of them, that it may not suit the taste, or meet the wants, or satisfy the belief of the present day, if it was adapted to those of its own day, any more than it would be an argument against the rudiments and the simple stories which form the studies of the boy, that they are laid aside by the full-grown man.

Regarding them, then, as designed in Providence to educate mankind, I pray you to consider first the extent of time which they embrace in their enduring annals. They are venerable beyond all other compositions from their extreme antiquity. They begin with the very earliest stage of human culture. We trace back their written characters even to the point of time, where all tradition has agreed to fix the invention of an alphabet ; and some of their oldest descriptions wear the appearance of having been borrowed from the picture-writing that preceded that invention. They begin, therefore, at the right place for accomplishing the great purpose that has been mentioned,—at the infancy of the world. They portray the scenes of that primeval history with a noble simplicity, till the era of the shepherd patriarchs passes into that of the great legislator of the Hebrew state. Then were formed the institutions of that peculiar people, which, though a nation neither of warriors, nor statesmen, nor merchants, nor scholars,—wedded to a little strip of earth from which they never went but into captivity,—have yet left

memorials of themselves more sublime than those of any other people, and marked themselves indelibly on the religious thought of almost every cultivated tribe now under heaven. Even the details of their public chronicles, though for the most part but the melancholy registers of their perverseness, are full of an instructive interest; insomuch as to give occasion to some one to say, that they are the very history of Providence itself, revealing almost to sight that divine hand, which makes and unmakes dominions, and which is forgotten but too easily when it veils itself behind secondary causes. The unrivaled line of the prophets now passes along; and after they have all, one after another, disappeared, and the Old Testament is ended, there follow on other writers imbued with the same devout spirit; till, in the fullness of time, and in the fullness of scientific research and social advancement and the stature of the human understanding,—“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners had spoken unto the fathers by the prophets, spoke to all posterity by his Son.” Does not this orderly series of heavenly manifestations, shown through so long a sweep of time, commencing with man’s childhood and completing itself only with his ripest strength, give some indication at least of its purpose to educate him to worthy apprehensions of his Maker and himself, to a becoming religious hope and fear?

Consider then further, that all this was the work of a single people, distinguished in nothing else but in that holy pre-eminence from the thousand kindreds and tongues, that have risen up in so vast an inter-

val, to make brotherhood with the mighty, and then to be broken forever,—to speak swelling words, and then to pass away into silence and oblivion. A single nation spreads itself out in its solemn traditions from the beginning of recorded time till no further oracle was needed,—the preceptress of the globe. Her common history is a register of the dealings of the Almighty. Her ordinary expressions are those of prophecy and psalm. Her very fables are hallowed by the sanctity of ages and the reverence of mankind. Is there nothing in these circumstances, that points out her office among the families of the earth? It is in the common order of things, it is the usual method of instruction, that some individual should be chosen and elevated to instruct his brethren. And is there nothing in her example to show her designation and appointment to so high a place?

What has become of the proud communities who arose with her and after her, and were in every respect but this far superior to her in renown? What has become of those who built the pyramids on what is now but the desert sand,—and of those who covered the Mediterranean sea with their commerce and battles,—and of those who thought that they had well nigh overrun the whole great globe with their empty conquests? Tyre the wise, now a naked rock by the water-side, has left no more sign of her wisdom than she has of her prosperity behind her. Babylon the great, a heap of rubbish strown over a morass, only exercises the fruitless ingenuity of antiquarians to decipher the inscriptions on the poor tiles of which

she was built. Egypt herself, the earliest seat of refined life, magnificent in her ruin, seems to offer nothing, after all the boasted discoveries of recent days, but barren names and titles and uncertain dates graven upon her gigantic remains. Their priests and their sacred books have perished alike, and there is no trace of them left on the general convictions and sentiments of human kind. But that small tribe maintains a spiritual life of its own and a perpetual influence, in the works of its gifted children. This was what our Savior meant, when he said that "salvation was of the Jews." He meant that for them was laid up the glory of preparing the way for a doctrine of perfect righteousness, and contributing to the establishment of a pure and universal faith. And indeed, brethren, when we remember his assertion, that Abraham saw his day and was glad,—when we think of the mighty interval, through which this connexion is extended between the Father of the faithful and the Son of God,—do we not find the highest authority for saying, that this despised portion of the world was singled out by heaven for the religious education of all the rest?

Consider furthermore the peculiar object that old dispensation had in view, and you will then see this more plainly. It was intended to establish firmly that first principle of true religion, that there is but one God, the Creator of all and of infinite perfections. This is the point, which it most earnestly labors, on which it perpetually dwells. It seems to defer to future opportunity and a period of greater advancement

all doctrines of further import or deeper speculation, and insists on this elemental truth in "precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line," like a faithful instructor who would initiate his scholars thoroughly in the rudiments of learning, before trying to lead them forward to other knowledge.

That the Old Testament is imperfect, therefore, in this sense, is its distinction and not its reproach. The objection, that it leaves untouched the most interesting topics of meditation, is thus seen to strengthen the best claim which it possesses on the admiration and gratitude of man. Its deficiency is prophetic; for it was awaiting a fulfilment in distant revelations of the truth and grace of God. That completion came to pass in the gospel, which is expressly called the fulfilling of the law and the prophets. While the leading position of that Old Covenant was the unity of God, the leading position of the New was the immortality of man. Together they compose the revealed testimony of the Lord. Together they finish that scheme of spiritual culture, which I have endeavored to describe.

Say now whether all this course of means, this system of preparations, has been thrown away; or whether it has not, on the contrary, wrought a great work upon society, and prospered in the thing whereunto it was sent? It has not, indeed, accomplished all that is to be done. It has not yet spread abroad its entire blessing. But we know that this is the very nature of education,—to go on by a gradual

process, and to produce its best fruits late. It has already accomplished much, and it shows itself still vigorous with promise. It has established in the common faith of humanity those two pillars of doctrine, which have just been alluded to—the unity of God and the immortality of man ;—and thus secures it forever against idolatry and against despair. The divinest intellects that ever lived have been unable to imagine any future progress in the condition of man, in which he would not date from these old scriptures the origin of his religious improvement, and draw from their treasury the richest language in which his growing conceptions can be expressed. Could we suppose it possible that the blessed volume, in which all these things are contained, should come to appear as no more than the primary lessons, by which the youth of the soul was to be brought up,—even then it would be of inestimable price. But it is much more than this. It preserves within itself the springs and elements of endless progress.

I have now endeavored to present a glimpse of the means thus used in Providence for the educating of the world. But we should not forget that whatever may be their effect at large, they should have some, at least, upon ourselves. Let others hear or forbear,—let the seeds of the word, as they are strown abroad over the field of the world, vegetate or die,—each one should ask himself, What manner of proficiency his own has been under this husbandry of the Lord? God, who at sundry times and in divers

manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets,
hath spoken unto us by his Son. See to it that you
refuse not him who speaketh. Give yourselves to
be taught and educated by the word of God. So
may you be trained up till you reach the stature of
the perfect in Christ Jesus.

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

BY REV. A. P. PEABODY.

Christianity is pre-eminently a social religion. It reveals new, and interesting, and far-reaching relations, in which every man stands to every other man. It affixes the seal of eternity to our social connexions, and bids us regard each other, not as co-tenants of the earth, but as co-heirs of heaven,—not as fellow-travelers for a few days, but as companions forever. It thus creates a bond of union, which time, space, and death cannot sever. In friendship thus indissoluble should Christ's disciples be united. And more especially should those, who, as teachers of his religion, profess to have learned of him, show that they are indeed his followers by the love that they bear one to another. Yet how sorely is the cause of Christ daily wounded by the anger, wrath, and malice of his ministers! How often is the ark of our faith desecrated by the contentious hands of its anointed bearers! Still we retain in our form of ordination a simple rite, which feelingly expresses the mutual sympathy, which ought to subsist between servants of the same Master, and heirs expectant of the same glory.

It gives me great pleasure, my beloved friend, by the use of this rite, to admit you into the clerical fraternity, and, in the name of the pastors here convened and the churches here represented, to offer you the hand of Christian fellowship. In presenting it, I welcome you to the duties, the trials, the rewards of the Christian ministry ;—to its duties, for they are the noblest that men or angels could perform ;—to its trials, for divine grace can make you more than conqueror over all of them ;—to its rewards, for they are such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived.

I introduce you by this rite, my brother, to no exclusive fellowship, to no party organization, to no sworn band of saints militant ; but to the great and glorious fraternity of all, who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, and who glorify God by doing good to the souls of men. Wherever beats a generous and devoted heart, wherever the hand of Christian affection is proffered to reclaim the straying or sustain the feeble, there you have a brother,—a brother whom it is your duty to own, love, and honor, even though bigotry prompt him to cast out your name as evil. Nor is this fraternity confined to this world alone. It numbers among its members the holy dead,—dead but to earth, alive to God and to duty,—who, having received power from the Father, doubtless

— “ oft with their golden pinions cleave
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivants
Against foul fiends, to aid us militant,—
Who for us fight, who watch and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant.”

To the same brotherhood also appertain the bright-robed angels of Jehovah, who are but “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” Nay, Jesus himself, though the Lord of glory and the Image of God, as the great Teacher of righteousness, disdains not to style himself our elder brother.

In introducing you into this high and holy fraternity, I welcome you to a life of peace,—not, indeed, of such peace as the world giveth,—not of sluggish indolence and vacuity. The faithful soldier of Christ cannot be like the slothful sentinel, who slumbers on hostile ground. But it is his privilege to be at rest from the conflicts of ambition, from the strife of passion, from the bustle of business, and the turmoil of secular care. It is his privilege to concentrate his vigor of body, his strength of mind, his fervor of heart, in one grand and all-absorbing enterprise of philanthropy and piety. This oneness of aim and effort reconciles the otherwise discordant elements of character, places every power and faculty in its just equilibrium with every other, and thus creates in the soul that “peace of God, which passeth all understanding.”

I welcome you also to a happy life. Trials will indeed cross your path ; but not the rayless, hopeless trials, which the lover of earthly gain, or honor, or pleasure is daily encountering. Your sky may be often clouded ; but the bow of divine promise will always span the cloud. You may meet with opposition from the sensual, the worldly, or the selfish ; but

you will take courage in the reflection that this is but the cross your Master bore. You may often long to see the result of your labors, and may at times be disheartened, because you cannot separate your little rill of benevolent effort from the broad and full stream of human charity; but you will be sent back with new vigor to your work by the hope that the rivulets, which are here united, will flow apart through the green pastures of Paradise. You may often weep, as you go forth bearing precious seed; but shall as often come again with rejoicing, bringing your sheaves with you.

My brother, may we not again exchange hands in token of the intimate connexion in which this day places us, and in pledge of the intimate friendship in which we hope to live, as neighbor watchmen on the walls of Zion? Your influence and usefulness it shall be my aim to cherish and enhance; mine I well know that you will regard as sacred. I promise you my constant sympathy, my fervent prayers, my cheerful co-operation; with what measure I mete, I rejoice in the belief that you will measure to me again.

And now, my brother, I bid you a hearty God-speed on your ministerial career. May He, who spake "unto the fathers by the prophets," and who has "spoken unto us by his son," speak to this people through you, and enable you to say with literal truth, as said your Master, "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." May God shed abroad in your heart his spirit of wisdom, holiness, and love. May He manifest himself through you, and make

your soul the shrine of his indwelling, the mirror of his image. May the ear, that hears you, bless you. May the eye, that sees you, give witness to you. May converted sinners, pledging their faith at this altar, form your ever-brightening crown of glory on earth. May dying saints, as their spirits are wafted heavenward on the breath of your prayers, bear to the throne of God their glad testimony to your fidelity. And, when pastor and people stand together before the judgement-seat of Christ, may you find yourself surrounded by a goodly company of the ransomed and happy, who through your ministry shall have been rendered meet for the worship of the temple not made with hands.

ADDRESS TO THE SOCIETY.

BY REV. S. K. LOTHROP.

BRETHREN OF THIS CHURCH AND CONGREGATION :

The interesting solemnities of this day, no less interesting to myself, than to you, are drawing toward a close. By prayer and the laying on of hands, your minister has been set apart to the work of the Lord in this place; he has received the pledge of his Brethren's Fellowship, and the Charge to be faithful to the momentous trust he has assumed. It remains only that you receive the same pledge and the same charge, and I crave your indulgence, while in the name of the Ecclesiastical Council here assembled, I present them to you.

We congratulate you, my friends, on the bright promises that gather around this hour, and trust in that God, with whom rests the strength of every purpose and the fulfillment of every hope, that no cloud of disappointment will ever overshadow them. We thank God, and we honor you, for the firmness with which you have clung to your faith, while deprived of a stated ministry. Knowing you, as we did, this is but what we expected of you. We honor you for the attachment you have shown to this place of wor-

ship, for the zeal you have manifested for the purity and simplicity of the Gospel, for the mutual forbearance and sympathy, that have marked your deliberations, and for the unanimity with which you have invited our young friend to become your religious teacher and Pastor. Our prayers for you have never ceased, our sympathy has never departed from you ; nor will they. Time nor distance will not cause us to forget you, and to you and your minister, we shall ever be ready to extend the hand of Christian fellowship, warm with the love of Christian hearts.

We are assured, Brethren, for we can speak from grateful experience, that you justly comprehend, and will be prompt to discharge all those duties, which a people owe to a faithful and devoted Pastor. But all of us need to be reminded of what we know ; to be encouraged to what we are zealous to perform. Suffer me, therefore, briefly to touch upon some of the obligations, which this day's transactions lay upon you.

Paul, in writing to the Thessalonians, says ; “ And we beseech you, Brethren, to know them which labor among you and are over you in the Lord, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.” This exhortation we address to you, as embracing the chief and sum of your obligations as members of a religious society. “ Know” this man of your choice ; let your esteem equal his fidelity, and your love, be as great as his services are valuable and important. Know him, not as a passing acquaintance, with whom the accidents of business connect you, but

in the true and full meaning of the Apostle, know him, as a brother, a religious teacher, a spiritual guide and comforter. Let him find a home in each of your families, a friend in each of your hearts. We can commend him to you, as one, who, with a holy purpose and a steadfast zeal, will devote himself to your highest interests and who will ever go in and out before you, we trust, in the fullness of the knowledge and in the riches of the mercy of God. His usefulness and his happiness are now in your hands ; see to it, Brethren, we entreat you, that his usefulness be not counteracted by any coldness, indifference, or want of exertion on your part, and let not his happiness be disturbed by your refusal to extend to him that candid and charitable judgement, which all need, that affection and kindness, which all desire, and without which the life of a minister has little comfort, and his labors but little fruit.

In the first place, know your minister in the pulpit. Let him always have the satisfaction and encouragement of seeing you here in the morning and evening service. This is your first duty to him, to yourselves, and to the cause of the gospel. "The Lord's day," is the great instrument of the gospel's power ; the cheerful and serious observance of it is the community's high tower of defence against the inroads of religious ignorance and insensibility, infidelity and vice. Be careful, therefore, to do nothing by your own example to weaken the efficacy of this instrument, to undermine the foundations of this tower. Come, we entreat you, on every returning Sab-

bath, to this house of the Lord, with devout and grateful hearts. Sickness is the only thing that will ever keep your pastor from the pulpit. Let sickness, or some necessity as imperious, be the only thing that keeps you from the pews. Indeed, your pastor will often stand here, when his body is weary and his soul faint; do not you therefore yield to indispositions so slight that you would not heed them on other days, or forsake assembling yourselves together as the manner of some is, for reasons, that would not operate to detain you from your business or your pleasures.

But, my friends, you are not only to hear, you are to "take heed how you hear." You must not enter these walls, merely because custom has made it habit, and public opinion makes it respectable. You must not enter as sometimes did the ancient people of God, who said one to another, "Come, let us hear what is the word that cometh from the Lord," because the preaching of the prophet was as a very lovely song of one who had a pleasant voice. You must not let the principal advantage you reap from your Pastor's sermons be the miserable distinction of having better than any one else discovered their faults. We feel assured, Brethren, that while your minister devotes himself to the extent of his abilities to your edification, you will not reward him with unjust and ungenerous censure. You will be lenient in your judgements. You will overlook accidental failures, and impute them not to willful negligence, but to some of those causes, which your knowledge of a

minister's duties, and a considerate kindness, can easily discover.

You will permit your minister also to preach to you directly and practically, to bring home religion to your personal characters, and apply to you the rules of duty with tenderness indeed and with respect, but with very great plainness of speech. Be not offended if he say things in the pulpit which conscience obliges you to apply to yourselves. Never let it be a ground of censure, that his sermons are marked by what is called "close preaching." Remember this is his office and duty. Is he placed here to please men, to preach what is popular, to prophesy smooth things?" He is here to please God, to preach Christ Jesus, to prophesy what is true. He may not always cry, Peace! peace! to the sinner's conscience. He must often sharpen its sting. He may not always "whisper sweet tales of Paradise;" he must often speak of the worm that never dies. He must not deal in the mere graces of rhetoric, for the display of his own ingenious conceits and imaginative powers. This would be a profanation of the precious and holy privileges of the sanctuary. He must reason upon those mighty themes which made Felix tremble, "righteousness, temperance, and judgement to come." O tempt him not to be faithless to this high trust by the praise you bestow upon his ingenious and doctrinal, rather than his practical discourses; tempt him not to overlook the great purpose of his ministry, by coming here simply "to see how the pearl of great price sparkles in the hands of him who presents it." Come rather to pos-

sess yourselves of the treasure. Come with that inward preparation of the spirit, that open ear of the heart, which alone makes the word to be heard unto edification.

Brethren, we exhort you to be “doers of the word and not hearers only.” Leave not your Pastor to struggle by himself, nor suppose that every thing that is to be done for the prosperity of the society and the advancement of your religious interests, is to be done by him *alone*. The people’s want of zeal is not an unfrequent cause of the pastor’s ill success. His generous efforts have met with no correspondent effort on their part. They have neutralized his labors. A seal is upon his lips. A palsy is upon his heart, and in their indifference and languor may be found the chief cause. As the organ of these assembled churches, I entreat you let not this blame ever rest upon you. Do you fan the fire that burns this day in the breast of your pastor. Give an impulse to his exertions should they ever flag, and provoke him and one another to good works. Heartless friendship and spiritless advocacy will ruin any cause. Nothing ever did, nothing ever can flourish and succeed under their blighting influence. Leave not your pastor, and the objects he is anxious to promote among you, to such friendship and such advocacy as this. Your faith is worthy; support it with all your strength: seek to advance it with all your zeal. It is precious; stand united in the breach, to defend it against any attack. It is sanctifying; exhibit in your characters its loveliness and power. To this point let your first

exertions be directed, if you would strengthen your minister's hands and gladden his heart. Unwearied kindness, courteous personal attentions, and a provision for temporal comfort, ample to excess,—these are no compensation for neglect here. In your improving characters and godly lives, in your deep personal interest in religious truth, let the servant of Christ find the gratifying evidence that his faithful labors among you are not in vain. Bring your children, that the waters of baptism, the seal of the covenant, may be sprinkled upon their brows, an emblem, as we trust, of those holy influences of his spirit, which God will shed down to bless and make happy their lives. Gather yourselves in penitence and joy around the communion table of our Lord, that, walking in all the ordinances as well as in all the commandments of the Lord blameless, you may be accepted of him in that day when he shall make up his jewels.

The topics upon which I have touched, have had reference principally to the duties which a people owe a minister in his public ministrations; as a man, a citizen, a Christian, he has claims upon them in the private social intercourse of life. That you may meet these, you will be careful to expect nothing more from him than reason authorizes, and not to form different rules for his conduct in respect to the common incidents of life, from those which you form for your own. He is to be an example to the flock in every thing virtuous, praiseworthy, and upright;—but the common frailties of human nature are not to be more rudely censured in him than in

other men, nor should his faults be made more important through the discussion of them, than they otherwise would be. You will exercise charity and candor, therefore, in judging of your minister's personal character and private conduct. And if any thing in his words or actions, public or private, give you uneasiness or offence, let it not lead to coldness or opposition, but seize the earliest opportunity to have a frank and unreserved conversation with him respecting it. This is the course, which true honor and Christian love alike point out, and it cannot fail to be followed by happy consequences. It may not heal all differences of opinion, but it will banish all coldness of feeling and lead to mutual respect and consideration. I feel, my friends, that I need not dwell longer upon any of these points. The kindness, which overlooked much and forgave more to my youthful inexperience, is yet fresh in my memory. I have not forgotten, I shall never forget it, and the only return I can now make, is to assure my young friend, who is to succeed me, which I do most cordially, that so long as he is faithful as a minister, he will ever find here, those who will be ready to allow him all the liberty, to treat him with all the respect, to extend to him all the kindness, which are due to him as a man.

Permit me to allude to one topic more and I have done. As members of a Christian church and a religious society, you have duties you owe to each other. There are feelings you ought to cherish, there are sympathies you ought to extend toward those who go

up with you to the house of God. "Ye are my disciples," says our Savior, "if ye love one another." In the name of these assembled churches and in his name, by whom we are called, we exhort you, Brethren, to obey this precept. Let there be among you, not simply a general agreement in your parochial affairs, and an undivided sentiment of respect and affection toward your pastor, but let there be also a spirit of deep, fervent, Christian love one toward another. It is too apt to be the case, in our religious societies, that they, who, week after week, and year after year, assemble within the same walls, for the purposes of religious worship, meet as strangers and depart as strangers. They lift up their thoughts together in prayer, and kneel around the same table of remembrance; but the bond of discipleship is not wound so closely around their hearts as it ought to be. Brethren, let it be wound round yours. Have holy associations with this place of your worship. Let not pride, or envy, or insensibility enter with you, into this consecrated place. You here pray to the universal Father; remember, as you go forth to the duties and the cares of life, that you are all brethren, and be ready in fulfillment of Christian sympathy, to weep with those among you who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice.

I have thus, as the organ of the Council, reminded you of some of those duties which devolve upon you as members of a religious society, and which we doubt not you will be prompt and faithful to discharge. If I have said any thing contrary to scripture and

truth, heed it not ; but if it agree with scripture and truth, heed it not as from me, but from a higher and purer source. One thing I do for you, in my own behalf. I pray for you, that the Almighty Father, may pour mercies upon you like showers, that he may enrich your pastor with all utterance and knowledge, and make him a blessing to you and your children ; and when death dissolves our earthly ties, may it only be to unite you and us in the bonds of everlasting love in the kingdom of heaven.

ORDER OF EXERCISES

AT THE ORDINATION OF

MR. EDGAR BUCKINGHAM,

AS PASTOR OF THE

First Unitarian Church and Society,

IN DOVER,

ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1835.

I. ANTHEM.

The great Jehovah is our awful theme,
Sublime in majesty, in power supreme.

II. INTRODUCTORY PRAYER, by Rev. Mr. THOMAS, of Concord.

III. SELECTIONS FROM SCRIPTURE, by Rev. Mr. WHEELER, of Standish.

IV. HYMN.

Arise, O King of grace, arise,
And enter to thy rest;
Lo! thy church waits, with longing eyes,
Thus to be owned and blest.

Here, mighty God, accept our vows,
Here let thy praise be spread;
Bless the provisions of thy house,
And fill thy poor with bread.

Here let the Son of David reign,
Let God's anointed shine;
Justice and truth his court maintain,
With love and power divine.

Here let him hold a lasting throne,
And, as his kingdom grows,
Fresh honors shall adorn his crown,
And shame confound his foes.

V. SERMON, by Rev. NATHANIEL L. FROTHINGHAM, of Boston.

VI. ORDAINING PRAYER, by Rev. FRANCIS PARKMAN, of Boston.

VII. CHARGE, by Rev. HENRY WARE, jun. of Cambridge.

VIII. RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP, by Rev. A. P. PEABODY, of Portsmouth.

IX. ORIGINAL HYMN.

Forth to the field, anointed Youth!
Be Love thy shield—thy sword be Truth:
Go forth, the Herald of thy God,
To sound his gospel grace abroad.

The Savior's love to all proclaim;
Teach Infant tongues to lisp his name;
To speak his praise and love, engage
Manhood, and Youth, and hoary Age.

Go forth, to warn, to soothe, to teach;
To Rich and Poor the Gospel preach;
Support the Feeble on his way,
And change the Wanderer's night to day.

Alarm the Sinner; cheer the Saint;
The Hungry feed; revive the Faint;
And be an Angel, sent to shed
Salvation o'er the Dying Bed.

Diffusing good, thus live and die,
Then pass to thy reward on high;
And see, around God's altar, stand,
Thousands, to bless thy guiding hand.

And now, O Lord, our service own;
Thou art our hope and strength alone;
Accept and prosper our design;
And be the power and glory thine.

X. ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE, by Rev. SAMUEL K. LOTHROP, of Boston.

XI. CONCLUDING PRAYER, by Rev. Mr. WELLS, of Kennebunk.

XII. ANTHEM.

Glory be to God on high,
And on earth peace, good will toward men.
We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee,
We glorify thee, we give thanks to thee,
For thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King,
Father almighty. Hallelujah. Amen.

XII. BENEDICTION.

